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FRENCH PRONUNCIATION.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—One is inclined eagerly to examine a paper¹ having for its subject the interesting topic chosen by Prof. McKibben. More than a year ago Prof. Koschwitz had published his *Parlers Parisiens*,²—a book that will always be prized for its valuable introduction in which the author gives a condensed, but complete, history of French pronunciation. With the impressions gained from a perusal of the latter volume fresh in the mind, a reader is likely to be disappointed in Prof. McKibben's pamphlet since it contains nothing new; furthermore, difficulty is experienced in attempting to discover on what principle the old material is arranged.

The general idea of the first part (pp. 1-7) seems to be that Paris furnishes the model for French pronunciation; that the number of people whose speech is accepted as correct is increasing rapidly and is no longer confined to any especial class. The writer next considers "the fact that those who speak well employ several kinds of good usage;" he illustrates this by alluding to the divergencies which appear in transcriptions of similar texts by Koschwitz and by Passy. Then, after referring to the constant but gradual changes taking place in language, he concludes:

"With these thoughts in mind, we may and should look for new light upon French pronunciation. But the old standard or standards, though slowly changing, are still valid; to them must conform all words and the pronunciation of those who use them."

Doubt will probably arise in a reader's mind as to the meaning of the terms "new light" and "old standards;" I think there may be some confusion throughout the article in the employment of the words "standard" and "usage."

Leaving aside these little exceptions, the paper will doubtless prove of value to many

¹ *Standards of French Pronunciation*. By George F. McKibben, Professor of French and German, Denison University, Granville, O: Read before the Ohio Modern Language Association, Dec. 27, 1893. Published by the Association. Columbus: Spahr & Glenn, 10 pp.

² Reviewed by Professor A. Rambeau in MOD. LANG. NOTES, ix, 276-285.

who have not made a particular study of the subject or who have not at hand such a manual as that of Koschwitz.

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DR. HALL'S "REJOINDER."

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—Dr. Fitzedward Hall's "Rejoinder" (MOD. LANG. NOTES, Nov. 1894) to my "Not So Very American" requires on my part some comments.

In the *Academy* for March 25, 1893 there appeared a communication from Dr. Hall, under the heading of "The American Dialect," in which many quotations from an American school book were cited as illustrating some of the baser elements of that dialect,—“substitutes” for the words and phrases of genuine English “such as should be pronounced intolerable.” The book from which Dr. Hall cited his examples was Mr. Eggleston's *First Book in American History*.

In reading the quotations from Mr. Eggleston's book, it seemed to me that some of the locutions censured by Dr. Hall were not Americanisms. A glance into a few English books and a hasty search in memoranda prepared for other matters quickly supplied, from British writings, citations parallel to a dozen or more locutions quoted from Mr. Eggleston. In the circumstances, I thought it worth while to point out the parallelism, and I did so in a very temperate, unpretentious little paper having the title, "Not So Very American," printed in MOD. LANG. NOTES, December, 1893. It was not at all within the scope of my remarks (much expanded in apparent length by the quotations supporting them) to "animadvert" on the opinions that made the staple of Dr. Hall's letter to the *Academy*.

But Dr. Hall, explaining the meaning of his *Academy* letter in seven columns of "Rejoinder" to my parallel quotations, scouts the idea that the locutions capped were cited by him as Americanisms. His rejection of the thought is vehement:

"The aim of Mr. Williams is to lay at my door that for which, if he made good his contention, I should justly be an object of contemptuous derision."